

Division 29: Treasury — Item 50, Royalties for Regions, \$652 278 000; and Item 137, Royalties for Regions, \$803 647 000 —

Ms J.M. Freeman, Chairman.

Mr B.J. Grylls, Minister for Regional Development.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the minister want to bring in his people? It is division 29, Treasury, items 50 and 137.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: It is procedural.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Am I able to ask a question about the country local government fund, because I think it relates to this division?

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure it does.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The member for Eyre highlighted a number of concerns about the impact of cutting the country local government fund in Esperance. I have asked for some tabled information, which I am looking forward to seeing. The figure for the country local government fund in the out years is \$6 million.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: That is not the country local government fund; that is the work we are doing on capacity building in local government and the regional centres plan that I talked about.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: In terms of the regional centres issue, has the minister had any discussions with the Premier about his comments about regional centres and country local government amalgamations, which I know the minister and his party oppose in regional WA?

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: Obviously, there have been some discussions about it, yes.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Is the minister standing firm that there will be no forced amalgamations in country Western Australia?

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: As I have said before, there are no proposed amalgamations in country Western Australia because the process that is being undertaken is for metropolitan local government reform.

The appropriation was recommended.

Meeting suspended from 6.00 pm to 7.00 pm